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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES
OF OUTER SPACE

DRAFT REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION

INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space held its thirty-fifth session at United Nations Headquarters from 15 to 26 June 1992. The officers of the Committee were as follows:

Chairman: Mr. Peter Hohenfellner (Austria)

Vice-Chairman: Mr. Aurel Dragos Munteanu (Romania)

Rapporteur: Mr. Edmundo Sussumu Fujita (Brazil)

The verbatim records of the Committee's meetings are contained in documents A/AC.105/PV.366-___.

Meetings of subsidiary bodies

2. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee held its twenty-ninth session at United Nations Headquarters from 25 February to 5 March 1992 under the chairmanship of Mr. John H. Carver (Australia). The report of the Subcommittee was issued as document A/AC.105/513.

3. The Legal Subcommittee held its thirty-first session at Geneva from 23 March to 10 April 1992 under the chairmanship of Mr. Václav Mikulka (Czechoslovakia). The report of the Subcommittee was issued as document A/AC.105/514. The summary records of the Subcommittee's meetings are contained in documents A/AC.105/C.2/SR.550-561.

4. At its opening meeting, the Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. Election of a Rapporteur.

3. Commemorative meeting on International Space Year.

4. Statement by the Chairman.

5. General exchange of views.

6. Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

7. Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on the work of its twenty-ninth session.

8. Report of the Legal Subcommittee on the work of its thirty-first session.

9. Implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

10. Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status.

11. Other matters.

12. Report of the Committee to the General Assembly.

Membership and attendance

5. In accordance with General Assembly resolutions 1721 E (XVI) of 20 December 1961, 3182 (XXVIII) of 18 December 1973, 32/196 B of 20 December 1977 and 35/16 of 3 November 1980, and with decision 45/315 of 11 December 1990, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was composed of the following Member States: Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Lebanon, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Netherlands, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam and Yugoslavia.

6. At its 367th and 368th meetings, the Committee decided to invite, at their request, the representatives of Bolivia, Cuba, Greece, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Korea, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Spain and the Holy See to attend the session of the Committee and to address it, as appropriate, on the understanding that it would be without prejudice to further requests of that nature and that it would not involve any decision of the Committee concerning status.

7. Representatives of the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) also attended the session.

8. Representatives of the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) of the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), the European Space Agency (ESA), the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (INTELSAT), the International Aeronautical Federation (IAF), the International Law Association (ILA) and the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS) also attended the session.

9. A list of representatives attending the session is contained in document A/AC.105/XXXV/INF/1.

Commemorative Meeting On International Space Year

10. The Committee noted that the General Assembly, in resolution 44/46, paragraph 20, had endorsed the initiative of international scientific organizations and bodies to designate 1992 as International Space Year and had recommended in resolution 46/45, paragraph 22, that the Committee dedicate at least one meeting of its regular session to the International Space Year. Accordingly, the Committee held its 366th meeting, on 15 June 1992, in commemoration of International Space Year.

11. At the special commemorative meeting to mark International Space Year, introductory statements were made by Mr. Peter Hohenfellner, Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs speaking on behalf of the Secretary-General, Mr. Alvaro Azcárraga, President of IAF, and Mr. W. I. Axford, President of COSPAR. A panel discussion was held on "New approaches to international cooperation in space in a changing world". Participants were Mr. Richard Barnes, former Head of International Affairs, United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA); Mr. Roy Gibson, former Director-General of ESA; Mr. U. R. Rao, Head of the Indian Space Research Organization; and Academician Roald Sagdeev, former Director of the Institute of Space Research of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Proceedings

12. Having been informed that the Committee's Rapporteur, Mr. Flavio Miragia Perri (Brazil), had been assigned to a new post, the Committee, at its 366th meeting, elected Mr. Edmundo Sussumu Fujita (Brazil) as its new Rapporteur.

13. At the 367th meeting, the Chairman of the Committee, in his opening statement, summarized the work of the Committee's subsidiary bodies and outlined the work before the Committee. He stressed the need to increase international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and to ensure

that the benefits of such cooperation were shared by all countries and all people (see A/AC.105/PV.367).

14. At the 367th meeting, the Chief of the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the Secretariat made a statement reviewing the work of the Office during the previous year and the documentation before the Committee.

15. At its 367th to 369th meetings, on 16 and 17 June 1992, the Committee held a general exchange of views, in the course of which statements were made by the representatives of Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Mexico, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Ukraine and the United States of America (see A/AC.105/PV.367-369).

16. The representatives of COSPAR, ESA, IAF, ILA, INTELSAT, and ISPRS, as well as the Expert on Space Applications of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, also made statements (see A/AC.105/PV.367, 368 and 371).

17. After considering the various items before it, the Committee, at its ___ meeting, on 26 June 1992, adopted its report to the General Assembly containing the recommendations and decisions set out below.

I. RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS

A. Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes (agenda item 6)

18. In accordance with paragraph 29 of General Assembly resolution 46/45 of 9 December 1991, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space continued its consideration, as a matter of priority, of ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

19. The Committee was of the view that the request of the General Assembly, in its resolution 46/45, to the Committee to consider, as a matter of priority, ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes and to report thereon, showed the concern felt by the international community and the need to promote international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, taking into account the needs of the developing countries. The Committee, through its work in the scientific, technical and legal fields, had an important role to play in ensuring that outer space was maintained for peaceful purposes. It was the firm belief of the members of the Committee that developments that would strengthen the role of the Committee in maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes should continue. The Committee had responsibilities relating to the strengthening of the international basis for the peaceful exploration and uses of outer space, which could cover, among other matters, further development of international space law, including, as appropriate, the preparation of international agreements governing various practical peaceful applications of the achievements of space science and

technology. Strengthening international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space also implied the need for the Committee itself to improve, whenever necessary, the methods and forms of its work.

20. The Committee agreed that a good way to broaden and deepen international cooperation in outer space was through international and regional programmes undertaken as part of universal endeavours such as International Space Year.

21. Some delegations expressed the view that the Committee should complement the work being done in bilateral and multilateral forums towards preventing an extension of the arms race into outer space and could provide substantive input to the discussions and negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. In that connection, while recognizing the unique competence of the Conference on Disarmament on the questions relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, they also expressed the view that the Committee should be kept informed of the progress made by the Conference on the questions and that working contacts should be established between the two bodies. Some delegations further pointed out that the scope of the priority item on the agenda of the Committee went beyond purely disarmament areas to include, for example, transparency and confidence-building measures, where the Committee could make a useful contribution, particularly in view of the changing relationship between the major space Powers. Some delegations also expressed the view that the peaceful uses of outer space were inseparably linked to the non-peaceful uses and that the best way for the Committee to contribute to maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes was to promote international cooperation, observing the principle that the exploration and utilization of outer space should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all States, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries.

22. Other delegations expressed the view that disarmament questions did not fall within the competence of the Committee. They pointed out that, within the United Nations, the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space was within the exclusive competence of the First Committee of the General Assembly and of the Conference on Disarmament. Some of those delegations expressed the view that the Committee should avoid extraneous and divisive topics such as disarmament and concentrate on strengthening the scientific and technical content of its work and on efforts to broaden and deepen cooperation by all countries in outer space activities. They felt that it would be inappropriate to engage in an exchange of information between the two bodies and questioned the need to have contacts between them. Some delegations reiterated the view that the best way for the Committee to contribute to maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes was to promote international cooperation further by revitalizing its work and that of its subcommittees.

23. The Committee took note of a working paper submitted by the Russian Federation (A/AC.105/L.195) on the Russian Space Agency.